GEORGE MANN · TAZIO BETTIN · ENRICA EREN ANGIOLINI · ROB STEEN

WARHAMMER 40,000

WILL OF IRON

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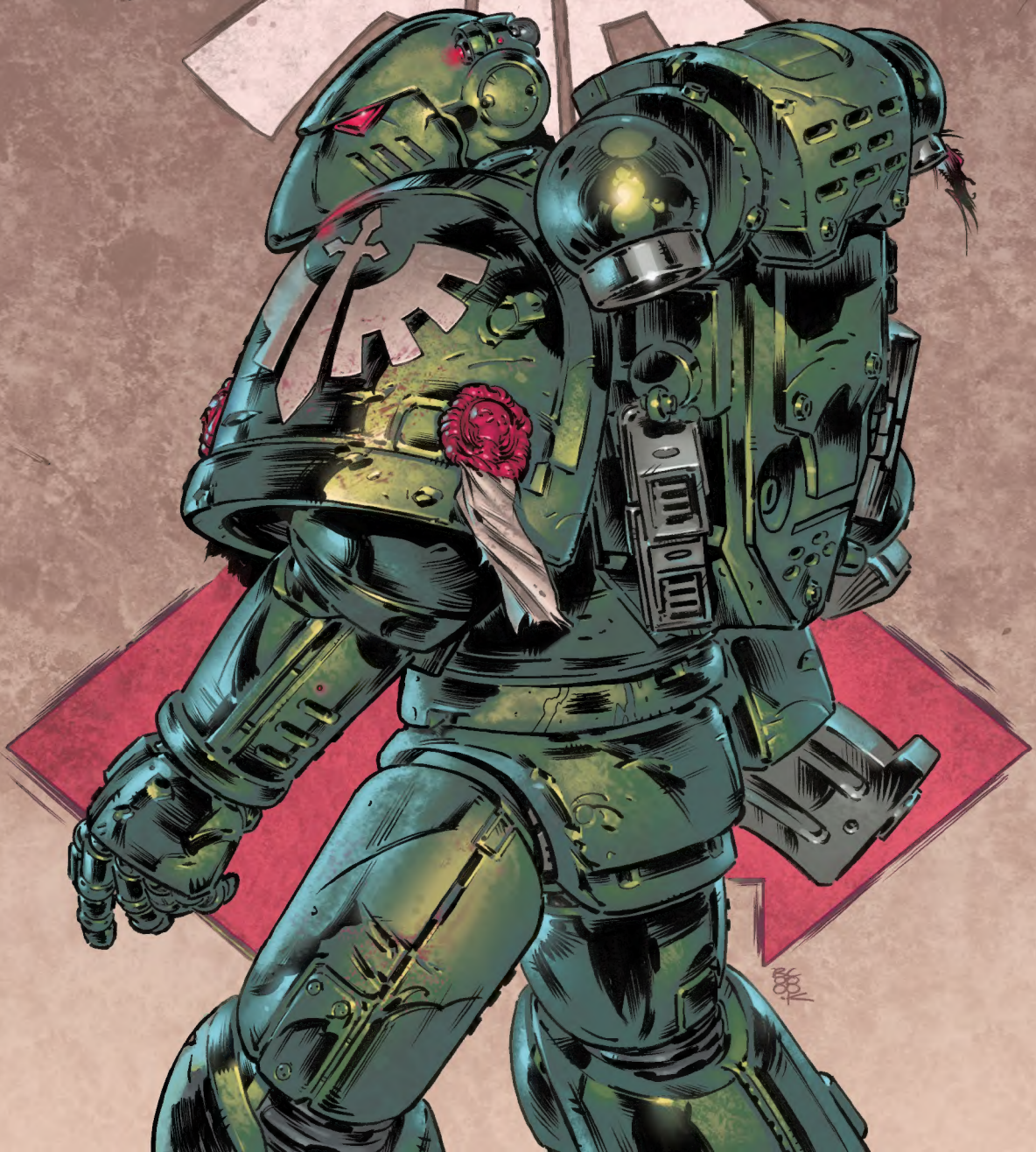

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PART 1 OF 4

SPACE MARINE BALTUS

Part of a Lion's Blade Strike Force, containing Dark Angels Space Marines of the 2nd Company, Baltus is devoted and loyal. The Calaphrax campaign offers him the chance to advance into the inner circle of his Chapter – and experience the revelations such progress entails.

INTERROGATOR-CHAPLAIN ALTHEOUS

Somber, serious and dedicated, Altheous carries the burden of knowledge. He has seen much during his long life, and knows all the secrets buried in the Dark Angels' past. In Calaphrax he will face the ultimate test of what must be done to keep them hidden from the universe.

INQUISITOR SABBATHIEL

Astor Sabbathiel is relentless in the pursuit of her goals, to the extent that she often engages in questionable methods to get to the truth. Three Acolytes and a Jokaero Weaponsmith assist her in her quest to root out heresy and Chaos wherever they may be found – wherever the trail leads.

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HONOUR.
IT IS WRITTEN IN OUR BLOOD. CODIFIED IN THE VERY ESSENCE OF OUR BEING.
IT RESONATES IN ALL THAT WE DO; ALL THAT WE ARE.
OURS IS THE SEARCH FOR LIGHT IN THE GLOAMING OF THE UNIVERSE, THE DYING EMBERS IN THE BLACKEST OF NIGHTS.
FOR WE ARE NOT ONLY ANGELS OF DARKNESS, FORGED IN WAR TO SMITE THE ENEMIES OF MANKIND, BUT ANGELS OF REDEMPTION, ALSO.
AND IN CALAPHRAX, WE SEEK THOSE WHO MUST REPENT."

THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN AND MUST BE RETURNED TO THE LIGHT.
LORD AZRAEL.
SERAPHUS. ALTHEOUS. THE TIME IS UPON US. THE CIRCLE HAS SPOKEN.
THERE IS WORD OF OUR QUARRY?
PERHAPS. AN ANCIENT VEIL HAS BEEN LIFTED, AN OLD HUNTING GROUND EXPOSED.
YOU MUST ASSEMBLE A STRIKE FORCE AND MAKE HASTE TO THE CALAPHRAX CLUSTER WITHIN THE HOUR.
THE CALAPHRAX CLUSTER?
BUT IT IS SHROUDED IN THE WARP STORMS OF EONS--IMPASSABLE SINCE THE DAYS OF THE GREAT BETRAYAL. WHATEVER OCCURRED THERE HAS LONG BEEN ERODED BY THE GREAT WASH OF HISTORY.
THE STORMS HAVE ABATED; THE DEEDS OF OUR FOREFATHERS ARE LAID BARE. THE REGION IS ONCE AGAIN PASSABLE... FOR NOW.
THE CIRCLE FEARS WHAT MAY BE EXPOSED.

AND YET THE HUNTING, TOO, MAY PROVE RICH.
IT IS SO. I SEE YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT MUST BE DONE.
AYE.
AND, OF COURSE, THE HASTE WITH WHICH YOU MUST DO IT. IT IS UNTHINKABLE THAT OUR ENEMIES MIGHT SET FOOT UPON THOSE BLIGHTED WORLDS BEFORE US.
YET YOU UNDERSTAND, MY LORD, THAT THIS MIGHT REPRESENT A MISSION OF GREAT PERIL. FESTERING THINGS MAY LIE BEYOND THAT VEIL.
THINGS THAT HAVE HAD ALMOST TEN MILLENNIA TO GATHER THEIR STRENGTH. FOR NOW, THEY SLEEP, BUT WE MIGHT WAKE THEM, AND SO UNLEASH THEM UPON THE GALAXY.
YET STILL, I FIND THE RISK A WORTHY ONE. THERE IS NO CHOICE.
IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE AREA IS... CLEANSED. I TRUST FEW OTHERS TO SEE THAT TASK DONE, AS I TRUST YOU, BROTHERS. YOU WILL DO YOUR DUTY.
ALWAYS.
GO NOW. GATHER YOUR FORCES.
AND FLY ON SWIFT WINGS, SO YOU MAY SEE THE HONOUR OF OUR CHAPTER IS ASSURED.

"FOR THERE ARE OTHERS WHO WILL NOT DELAY, AND SEEK TO UNCOVER THAT WHICH SHOULD REMAIN UNSEEN."
THUNK
CREAK

INQUISITOR SABBATHIEL.
OUR PREY IS ON THE MOVE.
THEY MAKE HASTE FOR THE CALAPHRAX CLUSTER. THE WARP STORMS THAT HAVE BLIGHTED THE REGION FOR COUNTLESS MILLENNIA HAVE FINALLY CALMED.
THEY SEEK TO OBFUSCATE WHAT MIGHT BE DISCOVERED THERE.
SO SAYS THAT *THING* IN THE HOLD.
ARE YOU CERTAIN IT CAN BE TRUSTED?

"THIS SEAL IS THE ONLY CERTAINTY I REQUIRE.
"FOR TOO LONG HAVE I SOUGHT THE TRUTH.
"I KNOW THE DARK ANGELS FOR WHAT THEY ARE.
"THEY MASK THEIR TREACHERY IN SECRETS AND RITUALS.
"BUT THEY WALK WITH DAEMONS. I HAVE SEEN IT, AND AT CALAPHRAX, I SHALL PROVE IT."

THEN YOU TAKE US INTO BATTLE?
NO, ANYA. TO WAGE WAR AGAINST SUCH AN ENEMY IS TO LOSE-- TO DIE.

WE MUST ENGAGE IN A FAR MORE SUBTLE STRATAGEM.
WE MUST ENCOURAGE THEM TO CONDEMN *THEMSELVES*.

THIS IS A DANGEROUS GAME YOU UNDERTAKE, OLD FRIEND.
YET IT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT OF GAMES, FITCH. THE GREATEST ENEMY OF MANKIND IS BORN NOT OF THE WARP, BUT OF HUMANITY ITSELF.
TRAITORS MUST BE CLEANSED.

HERA. INSTRUCT THE NAVIGATOR. WE MAKE HASTE TO THE CALAPHRAX CLUSTER.

THERE, WE SHALL DRAG THE SECRETS OF THESE *DARK ANGELS* INTO THE LIGHT.

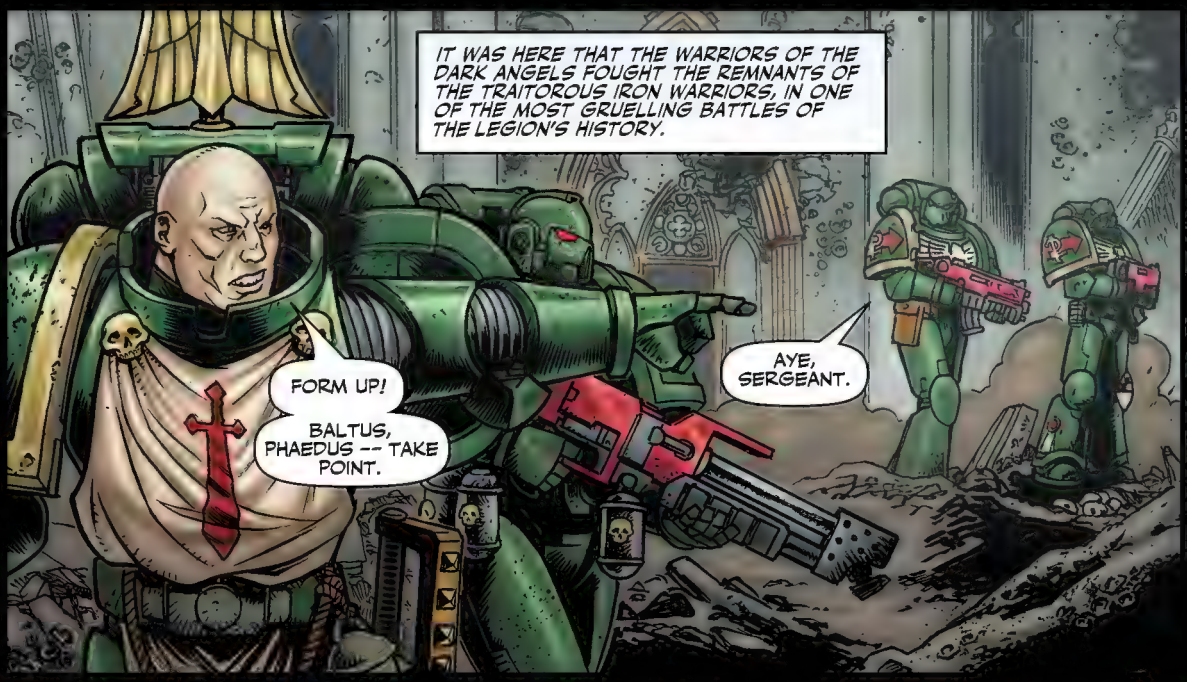
"WE BEGIN ON EXYRION."

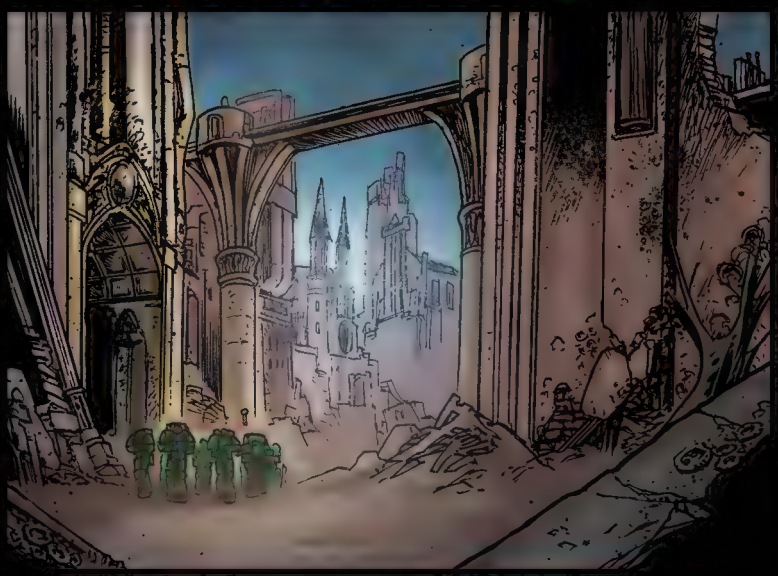
LAUNCH THE FIRST WAVE.
PHUT
PHUT
PHUT
VROOOOSH

KOOOOM
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

THOOM
KRA-KOOM
SKKKRRRRR
HISSS

EXYRION.
THE DEAD WORLD.
LOST BEHIND THE VEIL FOR AN ETERNITY.


IT WAS HERE THAT THE WARRIORS OF THE DARK ANGELS FOUGHT THE REMNANTS OF THE TRAITOROUS IRON WARRIORS, IN ONE OF THE MOST GRUELLING BATTLES OF THE LEGION'S HISTORY.
FORM UP!
BALTUS, PHAEDUS -- TAKE POINT.
AYE, SERGEANT.



OVER HERE! ENEMY INCOMING!

HERE, BROTHER WENT TO WAR AGAINST BROTHER.
SUFFER NOT THE WARPSPAWN TO LIVE!
HERE, THE GENESEED THAT NOW STRENGTHENS MY BODY AND MY RESOLVE WAS BAPTISED IN BLOOD AND DEATH.
PHAEDUS! BEHIND YOU!
OVER HERE! THERE ARE MORE OF THEM.

AND HERE THE OPEN GRAVES OF THAT BATTLE MAY BE FOUND STILL.

THE PLANET *TINTAROTH*. IT LIES ON THE OUTER RIM OF THE CLUSTER, BATHED IN THE LIGHT OF TWIN STARS, AND PROTECTED FROM THE TRANSMUTING EFFECT OF THE WARP STORMS BY THEIR SCOURING GLARE.
THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT THE PLANET REMAINS *INHABITED*.

AFTER ALL THIS TIME?
AYE. I FEAR WHAT MIGHT HAVE BECOME OF THEM.

IT IS A WORLD THAT MIGHT EASILY BE SWAYED AGAINST US.
YOU MUST MOUNT A CONTACT MISSION IMMEDIATELY. IT WILL INVOLVE EITHER GREAT DIPLOMACY...

OR GREAT *RESOLVE*. I SEE THAT IT IS SO. I SHALL MAKE PREPARATIONS.

"IN MY ABSENCE, I REMIND YOU TO BE ON YOUR GUARD."

"THE ENEMIES OF THE IMPERIUM APPROACH FROM ALL CORNERS."
WE ARE WITHIN REACH OF EXYRION, KORUS. WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE US DO?
BRING US AROUND BEHIND THE PLANE OF PANDROSAR, RENDIX, SO WE MIGHT TAKE A MEASURE OF OUR ENEMY.
THEN, WHEN ASTORAX'S BONES GIVE TELL OF FAIR WIND, THE IRON WARRIORS SHALL STRIKE.
WE SHALL DECIMATE THE ENEMY AND RECLAIM WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY OURS.
TO BE CONTINUED...

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WRITER
GEORGE MANN

ARTIST
TAZIO BETTIN

COLORIST
ENRICA EREN ANGIOLINI

LETTERER ROB STEEN

SENIOR COMICS EDITOR ANDREW JAMES

DESIGNER DONNA ASKEM • SENIOR DESIGNER ANDREW LEUNG

ASSISTANT EDITOR JESSICA BURTON

TITAN COMICS

TITAN COMICS EDITORIAL Tom Williams, Amoona Saohin
PRODUCTION SUPERVISORS Jackie Flook, Maria Pearson
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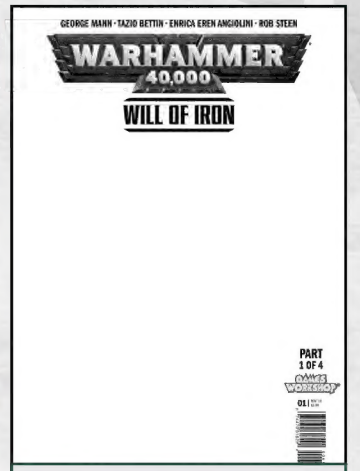

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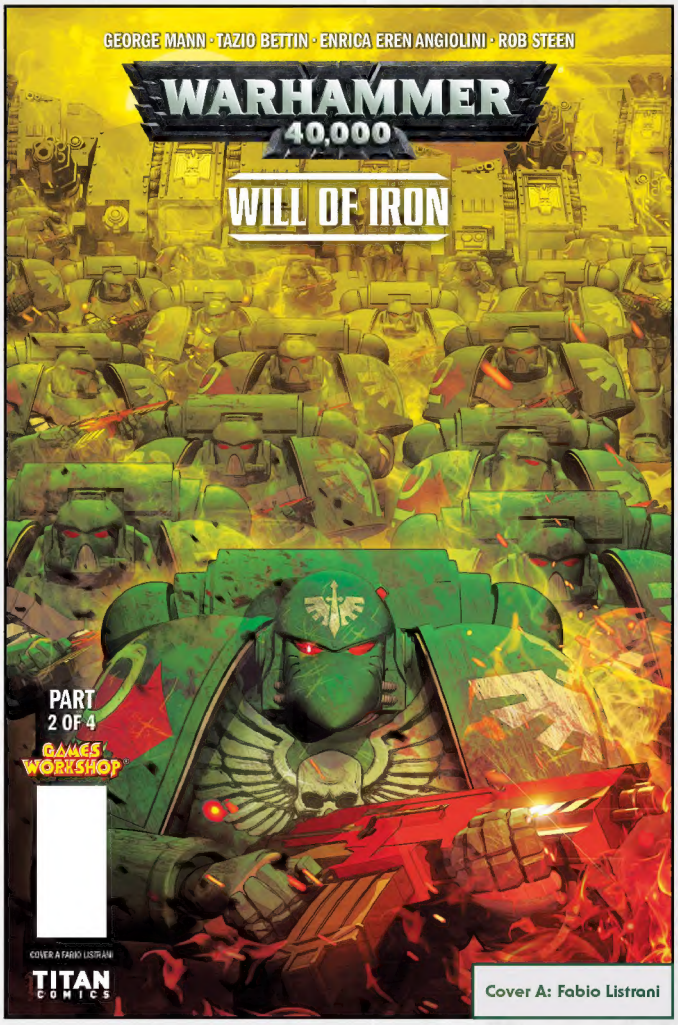

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